

SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD

SUMMARY MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING

October 15, 1999
9:00 a.m.

City Council Chambers
Yakima, Washington

SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

William Ruckelshaus, Chair	Seattle
Brenda McMurray	Yakima
Steve Meyer	Executive Director, Conservation Commission
Tom Fitzsimmons	Director, Department of Ecology
Tim Smith	Designee, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Craig Partridge	Designee, Department of Natural Resources
Jerry Alb	Designee, Department of Transportation

A verbatim recorded tape of the meeting's proceedings is retained by IAC as the formal record of the meeting.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Ruckelshaus called the meeting to order at 9:05 and welcomed members of the board and the audience.

Markita George-Oliver, Assistant to the Mayor, City of Yakima, welcomed the Board.

Chair Ruckelshaus reviewed Board actions to date, explained the public documents currently out for public comment and briefly discussed the meeting agenda. In addition, he announced that in the absence of a quorum (3), no votes would be taken.

Brenda McMurray detailed the afternoon tour which included a cooperative project at the Selah Reach and two projects on the Yakima River.

MANAGEMENT AND STATUS REPORTS

Director Laura Johnson provided a status report on the public review process. The first public comment workshop was held in Yakima with about 40 attendees. Other workshops are scheduled in Mt. Vernon (10/21/99) and Olympia (10/26/99). In addition, the draft documents can be found on the SRFB's website. Comments are due November 1.

Debra Wilhelmi reviewed the financial and management services memo and attachments (see meeting materials). Chair Ruckelshaus reported that federal funding (\$20 million less \$2 million directly appropriated to tribes) continues to be held in conference committee. In response to a request by Tom Fitzsimmons, Ms. Wilhelmi agreed to revise charts to clarify which federal funds have been appropriated to DOE

(and other agencies) but are not anticipated.

GEOGRAPHIC UNITS USED IN SALMON RECOVERY

Director Johnson explained that this agenda item was intended to address a question from the October 1 meeting asking for clarification of salmon-related regions and geographic units in the state. Using a variety of sources and geographic data systems, staff identified a number of salmon-relevant “regional” descriptions (see meeting materials)

Using a series of overheads, Debra Wilhelmi presented information which identified counties, legislative districts, congressional districts, Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA), Watershed Administrative Units (WAU), Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUC), Salmon Recovery Regions (SRR), Eco-Provinces, Sub-Basins, Watershed Management Areas (WMA), Lead Entities (LE) and Evolutionary Significant Units (ESU).

Board members reviewed the interrelationships between lead entities and ESUs and the possible benefits of funding projects through lead entities. The importance of planning and goal setting was also discussed.

REQUEST FOR BARRIER INVENTORY PROJECTS

Director Johnson reported that the Board deferred action on the request for increased funding for several inventory related projects at the Vancouver meeting. The Interagency Review Team (IRT) was asked to address the requests and submit a recommendation.

Tim Smith, IRT Chair, reported that proponents of five projects, originally funded in 1997, requested additional funding of approximately \$500,000 to cover unanticipated costs associated with the scope and complexity of the work in their project proposals. The IRT recommends the Board not fund these projects. Further, the IRT encourages Board development of a policy to guide inventory projects over time and a strategy for the use of inventory dollars.

Chair Ruckelshaus called for public testimony.

Brian Abbott	District Coordinator, Pierce Conservation District Reviewed the roles and responsibilities of conservation districts and explained the importance of the fish barrier inventory projects (see meeting materials for hand-out). In order to complete the inventory, the district needs approximately \$84,000 to complete the evaluation and prioritization, finish GIS layer, and continue the coordination with SSHIAP and lead entities.
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In response to a question, Cliff Hall, Department of Transportation (DOT), reported that less than 20% of the state’s fish barriers have been inventoried and identified. To ensure that inventory projects are meshed with the overall habitat needs of a

watershed, the information can be linked to other assessments through data base layering.

Jamie Glasgow Science/Research Director, Washington Trout
Encouraged funding for the prioritization lists and explained how base information is necessary for future decisions regarding which culverts should be repaired. Habitat surveys not yet completed are components of the priority index calculation which gives more weight to culverts which increase habitat upstream.

Tom Fitzsimmons supported the idea of having a broader view of funding priorities. He asked how much of the investment could be wasted if these projects are not completed.

Tom Murdoch Executive Director, The Adopt-A-Stream Foundation
Explained that the Foundation's mission is to teach people how to be stewards of their watersheds. Although inventories on public property are fairly easy, private property inventories become more difficult. He urged Board support for inventories and necessary funding to complete them.

Brian Erickson Project Coordinator, Grays Harbor Conservation District
Urged support for fish passage barrier inventory prioritization projects. Would require an additional \$170,000 to complete the work.

Chair Ruckelshaus explained that a vote could not be taken for lack of a quorum. He also stressed that even though the inventory projects are important, the Board will need to determine how they fit into the overall salmon recovery effort and how funding for the projects will be allocated.

Brenda McMurray agreed and stated that the Board will need to learn how initial funds were distributed and then determine whether or not to continue funding in the same manner. The Board will need to use past experience to formulate a strategy for fish passage barrier programs and other important activities.

LIMITING FACTORS ANALYSIS

Steve Meyer provided a brief background of the "limiting factors" program which began with the passage of Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2496.

Ed Manary, Washington Conservation Commission, explained the details of the bill and the roles delegated by the legislation (see meeting materials). Using a limiting factors analysis, staff can provide information on habitat by combining a series of data bases from various agencies - state, federal and tribal - and the field knowledge of professional biological staff.

Mr. Manary responded to Board questions:

Q: Could you speak to the processes that are being used to identify habitat that should be protected? Do those processes vary between watersheds?

A: The technical advisory group (TAG) is asked to identify data that indicates functioning habitats considered to be in critical need of protection. Much of the information is based on the personal observations of TAG members.

Q: How do you handle issues on land when the landowner does not wish to publicize information about habitat on private lands?

A: In certain areas of the state this can be a very threatening issue and the TAGs can list the property as a data gap.

Q: Would private landowner incentives in particular watersheds make a difference?

A: A total recovery package will need to address the question of protection as well as restoration. However, regulation on private lands is not one of our goals.

Q: Will these limiting factors analyses help determine where the most important barrier removal projects might be?

A: In some cases, however, much depends on the geographic area.

Q: In the eight WRIAs where limiting factors analyses have been completed, how is the information being used and by whom?

A: (by John Cambelick, Fish Coordinator, North Olympic Peninsula- WRIA 19) The limiting factors analysis is available in WRIA 19 and the committee will be using the data to evaluate and prioritize projects that are submitted from various groups and citizens in the WRIA. Eventually the data will be used to develop a "pick list" of potential projects that could be done in the watershed. In addition, the analysis will significantly enhance the ability of the WRIA to select projects for SRFB applications.

Q: How will the completed limiting factors analyses be combined at a statewide level to identify the limiting habitats statewide?

A: Commission staff is unsure; their responsibility is to complete the analyses quickly and in a consistent format to enhance decision-making.

Steve Meyer reported that the Joint Natural Resources Cabinet (JNRC) has been struggling with this issue and Tom Fitzsimmons elaborated saying that the JNRC is discussing whether or not all limiting factors need to be addressed to recover the species.

Steve Meyer agreed to provide the Board with a GIS map showing where the analyses have been completed, the eight that will be done in January and the remainder still in progress. Chair Ruckelshaus requested the ESUs be included.

After a lunch break, Chair Ruckelshaus reconvened the meeting at 12:55.

POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR FUNDING PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Jim Fox directed Board members to information following Tab #5 (see meeting materials). He explained that Senate Bill 5595, as passed by the 1999 legislature, contained funding for 13 specific salmon recovery programs and activities. Many of those were ongoing programs that had received funding in prior biennia, through agency budgets. The funding was moved to the SRFB, reflecting legislative expectations to provide coordination, more uniform reporting, and SRFB oversight.

In response to a question regarding programs necessary for the core function of providing assistance to habitat projects, Mr. Fox stated that many of these programs are in a middle ground and do not easily fit into the category of project or non-project. Activities that are integrally related to funding for specific projects include design, technical assistance, monitoring and maintenance. Other important programs and activities that aren't necessarily tied to a specific project include inventory, planning, education, research, enforcement, etc.

A survey of organizations around the state determined that funding for staff was most often mentioned as a fund use, followed by monitoring, technical assistance projects, funding for inventories, assessments, education, permit assistance and maintenance. Staff will present a series of options regarding programmatic funding for Board consideration at the November and December meetings.

During Board discussion the following points were highlighted:

- The JNRC worked together to submit agency budgets for salmon recovery and determine which programs could make a substantial difference.
- Steve Meyer preferred to fund Conservation Commission activities through the legislative appropriation process rather than through the SRFB.
- Tim Smith supported the need for accountability and coordination for programs as well as projects. The JNRC encouraged the Board to consider how these programs fit with the broader scope of salmon activities.
- Craig Partridge agreed that program funding is probably more appropriately a legislative function. However, the legislature, and probably Congress, will appropriate funding and the Board will need to determine funding for certain program activities. In addition, the Board will need to decide what messages to send to program applicants and the legislature.
- Chair Ruckelshaus stressed that refusal to fund a certain program, doesn't mean the program is not important to the recovery of salmon.
- Tom Fitzsimmons stated that "on the ground" projects are the most likely to make an impact. However, design, technical assistance, monitoring, etc. are important because they indirectly affect projects on the ground.
- Jerry Alb reported that many of the funded programs at DOT are to ensure compliance with permit actions and it would be very difficult to gain Transportation Commission or legislative approval for funding.
- Brenda McMurray urged the Board to identify programs that are habitat project oriented and work in concert with the programs receiving funding from other sources.

- Tom Fitzsimmons explained that the JNRC identified about \$92 million needed for state agencies plus additional funding needed for capital projects and local activities. The governor's budget decreased that amount to about \$50 million. Although the proposals remained intact, the funding sources shifted. The legislature took the assured general fund money and gave it to the project side. The hoped-for federal money was appropriated to the state agency side.

Director Johnson reported that Board comments will be shared with absent members (Cassidy, Peters and Roskelley) and the staff will have a series of recommendations and options for Board consideration at the December 3 meeting. Staff will work with agencies to determine programs that are related to agencies and operational budgets.

Tim Smith urged the Board to consider the nature of its relationship to and interaction with the legislature.

ITEM #6: LEAD ENTITIES: WHO THEY ARE...WHAT THEY DO...

Nina Carter, Manager for WDFW Partnership Programs, provided a brief background of the Lead Entity program and funding provided in past years.

Phil Trask presented an overview and policy framework for funding salmon recovery programs and activities (see meeting materials). Throughout the presentation, Mr. Trask responded to Board questions.

Q: What role, if any, does the state have in ensuring that the technical advisory groups (TAGs) have the requisite skills to perform their function?

A: The Conservation Commission assembles the technical advisory groups and tries to bring together as many knowledgeable people as possible, whether that be scientists from WDFW, NMFS, local fishermen, etc. The composition varies from TAG to TAG.

Q: Who chooses the TAGs?

A: Tim Smith responded that, in many cases, a group at the local level has been working on the issues under some umbrella or another. Since the change in statute (2496), the group is called a TAG and is primarily dealing with technical issues. He explained that the statutes also provide some guidance as to who should participate.

Q: Where are you finding "recovery goals" (as indicated in presentation)?

A: The recovery goals referred to are the individual goals imbedded in watershed recovery plans. Twelve or thirteen in the Puget Sound area have been through a draft phase, at least. A couple have gone through the process to implementation and a recovery goal is stated in the planning document. That is a numerical goal.

Chair Ruckelshaus stressed the importance of goals and who sets them. Ultimately, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will need to approve the recovery goal which, if achieved, would "de-list" the fish. That ESU-wide goal will need to be translated into watershed goals and lead entities, as representatives of the citizens, will need to be

committed to achieving the goal.

Tim Smith noted that specific parameters which were used to establish watershed goals vary by plan – watershed by watershed. Co-managers stress the need for criteria or protocols to standardize some of the watershed recovery plans in terms of their scope and the processes used to develop recovery goals. The WDFW would like to see that recovery goal stated in terms of smolt. The goal would be the smolt-to-spawner relationship which would allow you to track the increase in the productivity based on the number of smolts per spawner. Escapement goals are, largely, established.

Q: Are lead entities thinking on a larger scale about how their work will fit in with statewide salmon recovery process?

A: Some are very content to work within their WRIA and be very specific about their own needs. Others have a sense of merging together and forming larger efforts – a regional type of approach.

Mr. Trask introduced panelists:

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| Dennis Beach | Okanogan County, Water Resources Director
Reviewed salmon recovery activities in Okanogan County including the current efforts to establish the Upper Columbia Regional Salmon Recovery Board which has been modeled on the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board. |
| Mike Kaputa | Chelan County, Salmon Recovery Coordinator
Expressed support for processing grant requests through lead entities and encouraged funding for studies and assessments to obtain more accurate baseline information. |
| John Cambalik | Salmon Restoration Coordination, North Olympic Peninsula Lead Entity Group
Distributed a flow chart which described the planning, submission and evaluation process for habitat project proposals as well as application forms and public announcements (see meeting materials). In order to preserve the credibility of the lead entity, he urged the Board not to allow proposals to bypass the lead entity and asked the Board not to re-prioritize a project list brought forward by a lead entity. |
| Laurie Zoller | WRIA Coordinator, Klickitat Lead Entity
Described the activities of the group and stressed the importance of developing good working relationship with regional groups. Klickitat County looks to the SRFB for guidance and establishment of criteria and prioritization. Urged the Board to maintain the prioritization established at the regional level to assure credibility of the group's efforts. |

Brad Johnson Asotin County Conservation District
Invited Board to SE Washington for a meeting and tour of projects.

Jay Watson Director, Hood Canal Coordinating Council
Agreed with previous speakers. Stressed that lead entities and regions can work together and urged flexibility in guidelines.

Nina Carter reviewed Board requests for information which included:

- a map that clearly shows the 21 lead entities
- members of each of the 2496 groups and their longevity
- a map of 2514 crossovers, their memberships and ways they have been working together in water planning.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Ruckelshaus called for public testimony:

Paul Parker Policy Director, WA State Association of Counties
In reference to the previous budget discussion, the state agencies came up with their \$100 million, but that did not include the needs of local governments for salmon recovery. Cities and counties recommended at least \$50 million for projects and at least \$50 million for programmatic work (education, planning, etc.). The WSAC has been working to develop materials describing the status of county efforts in response to the listings. The completed report will be forwarded to the Board when it is available.

Director Johnson announced scheduled public comment workshops in Mt. Vernon (October 21) and Olympia (October 26) and encouraged Board participation. The next Board meeting is in Olympia (November 17) followed by a meeting in SeaTac (December 3).

Chair Ruckelshaus thanked participants and, there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

SRFB APPROVAL:

William Ruckelshaus, Chair

Date

Future Meetings: November 17, 1999 (Olympia)
December 3, 1999 (SeaTac)
January 21, 2000 (Spokane)
February 17-18, 2000 (Bremerton)
March 16-17, 2000 (Wenatchee)